

Message Text

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AMCONSUL DUSSELDORF
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E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: PINT, GW
SUBJECT: THE MARCH 5 MUNICIPAL ELECTIONS IN MUNICH:
AN ANALYSIS

REF: MUNICH 901

1. SUMMARY. THIS MESSAGE ATTEMPTS TO PROVIDE A FRAME-
WORK FOR EVALUATION OF THE MARCH 5 ELECTIONS FOR MUNICH'S
LORD MAYOR AND CITY COUNCIL. IT OUTLINES THE PRESENT
EXPECTATIONS OF SPD AND CSU FUNCTIONARIES HERE AS WELL AS
THE VIEWS OF EXPERT OBSERVERS OF THE LOCAL SCENE. AS OF
NOW, THE CONGEN BELIEVES THAT CSU CANDIDATE ERICH KIESL
IS LIKELY TO BE THE VICTOR IN THE LORD MAYOR CONTEST
AND THE CSU SHOULD WIN A THIN MAJORITY IN THE MUNICH
CITY COUNCIL. END SUMMARY.

2. BACKGROUND
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(A) LORD MAYOR ELECTION. IN THE POST WWII ERA, MUNICH
HAS BEEN AN SPD STRONGHOLD. MUNICH BEGAN ELECTING ITS
LORD MAYOR BY DIRECT POPULAR VOTE IN THE 1950S. SINCE
THAT TIME, THE SPD CANDIDATE HAS WON EVERY ELECTION BY AN
ABSOLUTE MAJORITY. IN THE 1960S, WHEN PRESENT FEDERAL
MIN JUSTICE HANS JOCHEN VOGEL WAS LORD MAYOR, THE SPD
WON THE LORD MAYOR ELECTIONS BY LANDSLIDES, RUNNING UP A

TOTAL OF 64.2 PERCENT IN 1960 AND A STAGGERING 78 PERCENT IN 1966. THESE PERCENTAGES WERE ATTRIBUTABLE IN LARGE MEASURE TO VOGEL'S COMPETENCE, PRAGMATISM AND REMARKABLE ENERGY. IN 1972 GEORG KRONAWITTER, MUNICH'S PRESENT LORD MAYOR, MAKING HIS FIRST BID FOR THE LORD MAYORSHIP, WON 55.7 PERCENT OF THE VOTE. HIS CSU OPPONENT GOT 37.6 PERCENT AND THE FDP CANDIDATE ONLY 3.2 PERCENT.

(B) CITY COUNCIL ELECTIONS. THE SPD HAS BEEN THE STRONGEST SINGLE PARTY IN THE MUNICH CITY COUNCIL THROUGHOUT THE POST WWII PERIOD. SINCE 1960, BY WHICH TIME MOST OF THE SMALLER PARTIES AND GROUPINGS HAD LOST WHATEVER BROAD PUBLIC SUPPORT THEY HAD PREVIOUSLY ENJOYED, THE SPD HAS HAD AN ABSOLUTE MAJORITY IN THE MUNICH CITY COUNCIL.

3. A SPLIT SPD. THE MUNICH SPD ORGANIZATION IS NOW SPLIT INTO TWO WARRING CAMPS, A MODERATE MINORITY AND A LEFTIST, LARGELY NEO-MARXIST MAJORITY. THE ORIGINS OF THIS SPLIT ARE TO BE FOUND IN THE DECISION OF THE SPD NATIONAL LEADERSHIP IN THE LATE 1960S TO INTEGRATE INTO THE PARTY AS MUCH OF THE EXTRA-PARLIMENTARY OPPOSITION (APO) AS FEASIBLE. THE LEFT-RIGHT STRUGGLE WHICH HAS PLAGUED THE MUNICH SPD FOR THE LAST EIGHT OR NINE YEARS HAS ESSENTIALLY BEEN A CONTEST FOR POWER BETWEEN PRAGMATIC SOCIAL DEMOCRATS OF THE FRITZ ERLER TRADITION LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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ON THE ONE HAND, AND DOGMATIC NEO-MARXIST JUSOS -- AND FORMER JUSOS FROM THE LEFT -- ON THE OTHER. THE LEFTISTS ARE PRESENTLY IN CONTROL OF THE MUNICH SPD ORGANIZATION, AND MAX VON HECKEL, THE SPD CANDIDATE FOR LORD MAYOR, IS PERHAPS THE LEAST AGGRESSIVE AND MOST PERSONABLE REPRESENTATIVE OF THIS LEFTIST GROUP.

4. A UNIFIED CSU. THE MUNICH CSU IS MORE UNIFIED AND BETTER LED THAN AT ANY TIME IN THE RECENT PAST. THE PRESENT CSU LORD MAYOR CANDIDATE KIESL HAS BEEN CHAIRMAN OF THE MUNICH CSU SINCE 1969. DURING THE PERIOD OF HIS CHAIRMANSHIP, FORMAL CSU MEMBERSHIP HAS INCREASED FROM 2,000 TO 12,000.

5. A MINISCULE FDP. ORIGINALLY A PARTY OF CLASSICAL EUROPEAN LIBERALS, THE MUNICH FDP HAS BECOME A PARTY OF YOUNG PROFESSIONALS -- ESPECIALLY PROFESSIONAL WOMEN -- AND VOTERS WHO ACTIVELY DISLIKE BOTH BIG PARTIES. FDP CANDIDATES FOR LORD MAYOR HAVE USUALLY WON LESS THAN FIVE PERCENT OF THE VOTE.

6. THE OTHERS. THE CITY HALL SOCIAL BLOCK (SOZIALER

RATHAUSBLOCK OR SRB), WHICH REPRESENTS SPD RENEGADES AND IS HEADED BY DEPUTY MAYOR HELMUT GITTEL, IS THE MOST SIGNIFICANT OF THE SMALLER GROUPS AND/OR PARTIES CONTESTING THE LORD MAYOR AND CITY COUNCIL ELECTIONS. THE SRB APPEARS TO HAVE THE BACKING OF THE CHAIRMAN OF THE FRITZ ERLER SOCIETY, AND HOPES TO ATTRACT THE SUPPORT OF DISENCHANTED FORMER SPD VOTERS. OTHER SMALL PARTIES/ GROUPINGS WHICH HAVE FIELDDED LORD MAYOR AND CITY COUNCIL CANDIDATES INCLUDE THE MUNICH BLOCK, THE DKP AND NPD. THE MUNICH BLOCK IS A CONSERVATIVE GROUP COMPRISED OF

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SMALL CRAFTSMEN, SHOPKEEPERS AND PROPERTY OWNERS. IT TENDS TO SUPPORT THE CSU BUT DIFFERS WITH THE CSU ON LOCAL TAX ISSUES.

7. HOW LOCAL PUNDITS VIEW THE ELECTIONS.

(A) LORD MAYOR ELECTION. ALL THE EXPERIENCED OBSERVERS KNOWN TO CONGEN ASSUME THAT SPD CANDIDATE VON HECKEL WILL NOT REPEAT NOT WIN AN ABSOLUTE MAJORITY OF THE VOTES ON MARCH 5. SOME OF THESE OBSERVERS, PERHAPS A MAJORITY, BELIEVE THAT CSU CANDIDATE KIESL WILL. IN RECENT DAYS THERE HAS BEEN INCREASING TALK AMONG SPD FUNCTIONARIES ABOUT THE POSSIBILITY OF A RUNOFF. THIS SEEMS TO REFLECT BOTH THE FEAR THAT AN SPD DEFEAT IN TRADITIONALLY "RED MUNICH" WOULD HAVE UNHAPPY FRG-WIDE REPERCUSSIONS

WITH THE SPD AND THE PALPABLE INCREASE IN MONEY, BIG-NAME SPEAKERS AND OTHER RESOURCES WHICH THE SPD NATIONAL ORGANIZATION IS NOW COMMITTING TO THE MUNICH CAMPAIGN. MEANWHILE, CSU FUNCTIONARIES ARE QUIETLY LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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CONFIDENT THAT KIESL WILL WIN.

(B) CITY COUNCIL ELECTIONS. THE PUNDITS AGREE THAT VON HECKEL IS LIKELY TO RUN A BIT AHEAD OF SPD CITY COUNCIL CANDIDATES AND THAT KIESL WILL TRAIL HIS CSU COMRADES. PRESENT INDICATIONS ARE THAT THE CSU COULD WELL WIN A MAJORITY OF THE 80 CITY COUNCIL SEATS PROVIDED THE FDP, SRB AND MUNICH BLOCK WIN A TOTAL OF NO MORE THAN 6 CITY COUNCIL SEATS.

9. CONGEN'S VIEW. CONGEN BELIEVES THAT THE DECISIVE FACTOR IN BOTH THE LORD MAYOR AND CITY COUNCIL ELECTIONS WILL BE HOW MANY REGULAR SPD VOTERS DECIDE TO STAY AT HOME. AT THIS POINT IN TIME, WE LOOK FOR A KIESL VICTORY, ALBEIT A VERY NARROW ONE, IN THE LORD MAYOR CONTEST AND A THIN CSU MAJORITY IN THE MUNICH CITY COUNCIL. IF INCOMBENT SPD LORD MAYOR KRONAWITTER WERE TO ENDORSE VON HECKEL (CONTRARY TO SOME NEWSPAPER REPORTS KRONAWITTER CONTINUES TO AVOID SUCH AN ENDORSEMENT), VON HECKEL'S CHANCES WOULD IMPROVE MEASUREABLY. WE LOOK FOR SPD NATIONAL LEADERSHIP TO EXERT INCREASING PRESSURE ON KRONAWITTER TO ENDORSE VON HECKEL. BETTS

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